

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Parent claims 1 and dependent claims 6, 7, 11-17, and 29 are present for consideration by the Examiner. For the reasons discussed below, it is believed that these claims comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112 and that they are clearly patentable over the references applied in the above-identified Office Action.

First, with respect to the formal rejections, parent claim 1 has been amended to make it clear that internal dividers, as well as panels, are folder components. That claim has also been amended to make it clear the claim calls for four “mechanisms”. Consequently, withdrawal of the §112 rejections is believed to be in order and is accordingly solicited.

As far as the art-based rejections are concerned, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 6, 7, 11-17, and 29 are clearly patentable over Blair and the combination of Blair and Blumberg.

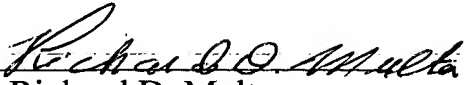
The requirement in parent claim 1 that an internal divider be secured to a folder panel aligned in side-by-side relationship with the divider is considered to patentably distinguish the compartmented folder manufacturing method defined in the subject claims from any method disclosed in or made obvious by Blair or Blair/Blumberg. Also patentably distinguishing the claims identified above from Blair and Blair/Blumberg is the requirement that one side of a divider edge be secured to a folder panel and that the opposite side of the divider edge be secured to a second folder panel or to a second internal divider. Parent claim 1 also uniquely requires that these two steps of securing the internal divider be performed at different work stations of a production line.

In Blair, in contrast, end sheets and book signatures are stacked together, then glued and/or tipped; and: “ a strip or tape 6 is applied to the margins adjacent the back edges 7 of the set 8 of the signature and backing and flyleaf to reinforce same.” This technique is shown in FIG. 13 of Blair. The reinforcing tape is wrapped around the exterior of the set at one edge thereof. There is absolutely no suggestion of securing an internal member of the set between two additional members, first on one side of such a member and then on the other. Nor is there any suggestion that one of these securing steps be performed with two members of the set in aligned, side-by-side relationship or that the two claimed securing steps be performed at different work stations.

As far as the foregoing claim limitations are concerned, Blumberg adds nothing. That patent was applied because it discloses a pleating mechanism. It has nothing to do with a method having those patentably distinguishing steps for securing an internal divider in place discussed in the preceding paragraph. In fact, the reference does not seem to disclose a pleating mechanism at all. It is instead concerned with the assembling of fasteners to file folder panels.

For the reasons discussed above, it is believed that applicants are entitled to favorable reconsideration of this application; and such action is accordingly solicited.

Signed at Shelton, County of Mason, State of Washington, this 22nd day of March, 2007.

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